Q(CGA) No. 145

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES (1993-94)

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

TWENTIETH REPORT

on

DROPPING OF ASSURANCES

(Presented on April 22, 1994)

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

April 6, 1994 / Chaitra 16, 1916 (Saka)

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CORRIGENDA

to the Twentieth Report of the
Committee on Government Assurances (1993-94)
(Tenth Lok Sabha)

Page No.	Para No.	Line	Correction
(v)	3	6	For March/April,1994 read April 6,1994
		7	For Draft read draft
4	1.15	12	For (S No 178) read (SQ No 178)
	15	17	For to read of
5	1.16	10	For Development read development
5	1.18	3	For US read USQ
6	1.24	10	Insert In after made
9	1.32	22	For uprotted read uprooted
13	2.17	3	delete keeping
	In the end	Insert	NEW DELHI April 6,1994 Chaitra 16,1916(Saka)

BASUDEB ACHARYA
Chairman
Committee on Government Assurances

15	5	5	For concern, funding read concern, finding
15	5	6	For counsel read Council
	5	25	For foreseable read foreseeable
16	6	36	For Letter read letter
17		7	For or read for
18	2	4	For budget session read Budget Session

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*COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES (1993-94)

CHAIRMAN

Shri Basudeb Acharia

MEMBERS

2. Shri Vishveshwar Bhagat
3. Shri Gurcharan Singh Dadhahoor
4. Prof. K. Venkatagiri Gowda
5. Shri P.P. Kaliaperumal
@6. Major (Retd.) D.D. Khanoria
7. Shri Harpal Panwar
8. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak
9. Shrimati Suryakanta Patil
10. Shri V. Sreenivasa Prasad
11. Shri Nawal Kishore Rai
12. Shri G. Ganga Reddy
13. Shri Yoganand Saraswati
14. Shri Shibu Soren
15. Shri V.S. Vijayaraghavan

SECRETARIAT

Dr. R.C. Bhardwaj	—	*Additional Secretary*
Shri Murari Lal	—	*Joint Secretary*
Shri Joginder Singh	—	*Deputy Secretary*
Shri Ram Autar Ram	—	*Under Secretary*

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* The Committee was nominated by the Speaker *w.e.f.* 20 December, 1993 *vide* para 2609 of Lok Sabha Bulletin Part-II dated 20.12.93.

@ Nominated to the Committee on 23 December, 1993 *vide* para 2628 of Lok Sabha Bulletin Part-II dated 23.12.93.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Committee on Government Assurances having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Twentieth Report of the Committee on Government Assurances.

2. The Committee (1993-94) were constituted on December 20, 1993.

3. The Committee at their sittings held on January 5 and 21, 1994 considered requests (*vide* Memoranda Nos. 80, 81, 82, 83, 84 and 85) received from the Ministries/Departments of the Government of India for dropping of pending assurances and their decisions are contained in this Report. At their sitting held on March/April, 1994, the Committee considered and adopted the Draft Twentieth Report on the Memoranda.

4. The Minutes of the aforesaid sittings of the Committee form part of the Report (Appendices).

5. The conclusions/observations of the Committee are contained in this Report.

NEW DELHI;
April 6, 1994

Chaitra 16, 1916 (Saka)

BASUDEB ACHARIA,
Chairman,
Committee on Government Assurances.

CHAPTER I
REPORT

(i) Consignment Tax

1. On April 21, 1989, the following Starred Question No. 686 given notice of by Shri Uttam Rathod, M.P., was addressed to the Minister of Finance:—

> (a) whether at a recent conference at Delhi of Chief Ministers of States a consensus was arrived at to introduce the consignment tax system in respect of different commodities; and
>
> (b) if so, follow-up action being taken by Government in the matter?"

1.1 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Shri Ajit Kumar Panja) gave the following reply:—

> "(a) Yes Sir.
>
> (b) The States, Union Territories and concerned Ministries/ Department of the Central Government have been addressed to indicate suggestions/views to formulate guidelines in the matter of grant of exemptions from the levy of consignment tax which the Central Government would do in consultation with the States. For this purpose a Committee of some Chief Ministers is being constituted. Action is also in hand to draft necessary legislation on consignment tax."

1.2 During the course of supplementaries on the question Shri Uttam Rathod desired to know 'as to what is the rate of the consignment tax and when should we expect the bill'.

1.3 In reply the Minister of Finance (Shri S.B. Chavan) gave the following reply:—

> "Sir, I have given a commitment that the Bill would be brought forward in the Monsoon Session of this year."

1.4 The above replies to part (b) of the question and supplementary point raised on the question were treated as an assurance and was required to be implemented by the Ministry of Finance by July 20, 1989 *i.e.* within three months of the date of the assurance given by the Minister.

1.5 On March 30, 1990, the following Unstarred Question No. 2973 given notice of by Sarvashri Pratap Rao Bhosle and Chitta Basu, M.Ps. was addressed to the Minister of Finance:—

> "(a) whether Government propose to levy consignment tax on goods on transfer from one State to another;
>
> (b) if so, the details thereof; and
>
> (c) if not, the reasons therefor?"

1.6 The then Minister of Finance (Shri Madhu Dandavate) gave the following reply:

> "(a) to (c): It is proposed to consult the Chief Ministers to take a final view in the matter."

1.7 The above reply to the question was treated as an assurance and was required to be implemented by the Ministry of Finance by June 29, 1990 *i.e.* within three months of the date of the assurance given by the Minister.

1.8 On July 26, 1991, the following Starred Question No. 178 given notice of by Shri Ratilal Kalidas Verma, M.P., was addressed to the Minister of Finance:—

> "(a) whether the Union Government have any proposal under consideration to bring forward a legislation for the levy of consignment tax;
>
> (b) if so, when and the broad details thereof;
>
> (c) whether the views expressed by some of the State Government in this regard have also been taken into consideration; and
>
> (d) if not, the reasons therefor?"

1.9 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Shri Rameshwar Thakur) gave the following reply:—

> "(a) to (d): Some proposals in this regard have been received. The matter requires further consultations with States."

1.10 The above reply to the question was treated as an assurance and was required to be implemented by the Ministry of Finance by October 25, 1991 *i.e.* within three months of the date of assurance given by the Minister.

1.11 The Ministry of Finance approached the Committee on Government Assurances through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. XIII/FIN(63)—SQ 686—LS/89dated December 2, 1993, to drop these three assurances on the grounds indicated below:—

> "....that the proposal to levy tax on inter-State consignment of goods (consignment tax) was discussed in the Inter-State Council meeting held on 10.10. 1990. It was decided in the meeting to

discuss the matter in the Conference of States' Finance Ministers. The matter was put up to the former Finance Minister who desired to discuss the same first in an internal meeting which was fixed for 18.2.91 and 9.3.91 but was postponed on each occasion. The matter was subsequently reviewed by the present Finance Minister on 22.8.1991. In view of the divergent opinions expressed by the Union Ministries/Departments and the State Governments about the nature of transactions and the types of commodities to be exempted from the levy of the proposed consignment tax, the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy was entrusted the task of drafting the guidelines for exercising the concurrent power of exemption by the Central Government and the State Governments.

The Report of National Institute of Public Finance & Policy was circulated to the State Governments and the concerned Central Ministries and Departments for their comments. The Tax Reforms Committee headed by Dr. Raja J. Chelliah also made certain observations in its Interim Report, which was sent to the Chief Ministers and Administrators of the States and Union Territories respectively. The matter was thereafter discussed on 6.11.1992 in a meeting of the Chief Secretaries of the States and Union Territories which was also attended to by the representatives of the concerned Central Ministries and in the Sub-Committee meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 11th February, 1993.

Recently, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has written to all the Chief Ministers of States and the concerned Governors/Lt. Governors and Administrators of Union Territories on 16th July, 1993. It has been stated in the letter that the consensus reached in the meeting of the Chief Ministers was not precise enough. Subsequent consultations with States had revealed that there was considerable divergence of views as regards the rates of Consignment Tax, the sharing of its proceeds and the general issues relating to concurrent exemptions. It was felt that it would be difficult to bring forward a Bill for this purpose unless a concensus was generated on the key parameters. Finance Minister has mentioned that there was considerable room for rethinking on the entire matter afresh so that there was no fragmentation of the common market in India. In this connection, the question of introducing a value Added Tax (VAT) both at the Centre and in the States in place of existing commodity taxes could also receive consideration. Many developed and developing countries in the world including those with federal structures had already switched over to a value added tax, as it was recognised to be a tax which had all the merits of simplicity, elasticity and flexibility. The National Institute of Public Finance & Policy was preparing a paper on VAT which was likely to be ready

shortly. After this paper is received, this matter would be reiewed in a meeting of the Chief Ministers and later in the National Development Council.

In view of the position explained above , the Assurance is not likely to be fulfilled in the near future. It is, therefore, requested to kindly move the Committee on Government Assurances to drop the assurance from the list of pending Assurances."

1.12 The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Finance for dropping of these assurances at their sitting held on January 5, 1994.

1.13 The Committee did not accede to the request for dropping these three assurances. The decision of the Committee was accordingly conveyed to the Ministry of Finance for compliance.

1.14 The Minsitry of Finance sought extension of time upto June 30, 1994 on the following grounds:—

"that the porposal to levy tax on inter-State consignment of goods (consignment tax) has not yet been materialised. Looking into the complex nature of the matter, it seems difficult rather impossible that the question of levy of consignment tax would materialise in near future."

1.15 The Committee regret to note that even after a lapse of about five years the assurance given by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance on April 21, 1989 for introduction of Consignment Tax System in respect of different commodities has not been fulfilled inspite of the concensus arrived at the conference of the Chief Ministers of States held at Delhi. The Committee also note that the commitment made by the Minister to bring forward a Bill for suitable legislation in the Monsoon Session of 1989 has also not been adhered to by the Government. On 30 March, 1990 the Minister of Finance in reply to a question (USQ No. 2973) had informed the House that the Chief Ministers of States were proposed to be consulted for a final view in the matter. Again on 26 July, 1991 the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance in reply to another question (S No. 178) had informed the House that some proposals had been received but the matter required further consultations with States. The Committee are aggrieved to note that the Ministry of Finance instead of making sincere efforts to fulfil the assurances has kept the issue lingering on for the last five years and has now approached the Committee to get rid to these assurances by requesting to get them dropped for the simple reason that it would be difficult to bring forward a Bill because the consensus reached in the meeting of the Chief Ministers was not precise enough and the subsequent consultations with States revealed that there was considerable divergence of views in regard to the rates of consignment tax, the sharing of its proceeds and general issues relating to concurrent exemptions.

1.16 The Committee further note that the Government is considering to introduce Value Added Tax (VAT) both at the Centre and States as an alternative to the existing 'Commodity Taxes' because it has all the merits of simplicity, elasticity and flexibility. The Committee hope that the matter would be given high priority by the Ministry of Finance and pursued with all seriousness it deserves for its clearance from the States and the National Development Council without any further loss of time. The Committee would appreciate if a Bill is introduced for suitable legislation in the matter in the Monsoon Session of Lok Sabha this year in order to implement the assurances. The Committee also desire to be apprised of the Development in this regard, at various stages, from time to time.

(ii) World Bank loan to NABARD Project

1.17 On November 27, 1992, the following Unstarred Question No. 840 given notice of by Kumari Pushpa Devi Singh, M.P., was addressed to the Minister of Finance:—

> "(a) whether the World Bank has not sanctioned any loan for the projects of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD);
>
> (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
>
> (c) the efforts made by the Government to get World Bank loan for some projects on NABARD?"

1.18 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Shri Rameshwar Thakur) gave the following reply:—

> "(a) The World Bank had sanctioned a loan package of US £ 375 million under NABARD I Project which was closed on 30.6.91 with utilisation of loan in full;
>
> (b) Does not arise;
>
> (c) Government of India has taken up with the World Bank another project for NABARD which is under consideration."

1.19 Reply to part (c) of the question was treated as an assurance by the Committee which was to be fulfilled within three months of the date of reply *i.e* by February 26, 1993.

1.20 The Ministry of Finance approached the Committee on Government Assurances through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. V/FIN(22)USQ 840—LS/92 dated December 21, 1993, to drop the assurance on the grounds indicated below:—

> "....that the time frame for a final decision to be taken in the matter is uncertain and as there would need to be detailed discussions with the World Bank before a decision to fund the project is taken, it is requested that the reply to part (c) of above

question may not be treated as assurance and may be deleted from list of assurances under intimation to this department."

1.21 The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Finance for dropping the assurance at their sitting held on January 21, 1994.

1.22 The Committee did not agree to drop the assurance. The decision of the Committee was accordingly conveyed to the Ministry of Finance for compliance.

1.23 The Committee note that the World Bank had sanctioned to India a loan package of US $ 375 million under NABARD-I Project which was closed on 30th June, 1991 with utilisation of loan in full. The Committee also note that Government of India had taken up with the World Bank another project for NABARD which was under consideration.

1.24 The Committee are unhappy to note that the progress made in this regard from November, 1992 till date has not been reported to the Committee. Instead the Committee have been approached by the Ministry of Finance for dropping of the assurance simply on the plea that the decision to be taken in the matter is uncertain. The Committee do not appreciate this ground for dropping of the assurance. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all out efforts should be made by Ministry of Finance to have the proposed project for NABARD settled with the World Bank without any further delay. The Committee also desire the Ministry of Finance to inform them of the progress made this regard from time to time.

(iii) Resettlement and rehabilitation of people affected by reservoir project

1.25 On July 29, 1993 the following Unstarred Question No. 876 given notice of by Dr. Krupasindhu Bhoi, M.P. was addressed to the Minister of Water Resources:

"(a) whether the Government have adopted a National Policy for resettlement and rehabilitation of people affected by reservoir projects;

(b) if so, the brief outlines thereof; and

(c) the specific steps taken for the implementation of the said policy?"

1.26 The Minister of State in the Ministry of Water Resources (Shri P.K. Thungon) gave the following reply:—

"(a) to (c): A sub-Committee of the National Water Board has prepared a draft National Policy for resettlement and rehabilitation of persons affected by reservoir projects. The guiding principles identified in the proposed National Resettlement and Rehabilitation Policy will cover broadly the following points:

(a) A comprehensive Resettlement and Rehabilitation plan must be made a precondition to the clearance of the project.

(b) Devise an attractive Resettlement and Rehabilitation package and set up institutional arrangements for its implementation with a high degree of sensitivity and earnestness. It should provide for housing, agricultural land or other income generating occupation, free transport of men and material to the resettlement site for each family.

(c) Representative bodies for public officials, independent technical experts, legal experts, community leaders and Non-governmental Organisations should be involved with the formulation of this plan.

(d) Resettlement and Rehabilitation package should cater to the needs of landless farmers, encroachers on forest areas, at least one year prior to the date of notification, or self employed people residing in the project affected areas.

(e) Major sons should be considered as an independent family.

(f) Loss of community property, resources base, amenities, services, socio-cultural, institutional and places of historical and cultural value should be restored in the relocation sites.

In other words, the plan provides compensatory measures for individual, family and community.

(g) Drinking water supply, water supply for cattle, grazing land and fodder, primary schools, panchayat house, approach roads from the main road, and internal roads, electric connection to each house and public lighting, primary health centre, religious places, cemetary and graveyard and places of public entertainment as existing in the earlier village should be provided in the resettlement sites.

(h) The plan should have special provisions for tribals and other disadvantaged groups.

The draft Policy is under consideration of the National Water Board. After it is approved by the National Water Board, it will be placed before the National Water Resources Council for adoption."

1.27 Reply to parts (a) to (c) of the question was treated as an assurance by the Committee which was to be fulfilled within three months of the date of reply *i.e.* by October 28, 1993.

1.28 The Ministry of Water Resources approached the Committee on Government Assurances through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. VII/WR (3) USQ 876-LS/93 dated 21.12.1993 to drop the assurance on the grounds indicated below:—

"...that the draft policy is presently under consideration of the National Water Board (NWB) that is constituted for review of the implementation of National Water Policy adopted by the National Water Resources Council (NWRC). The NWRC is chaired by the Prime Minister and the concerned Union Ministers, Chief Ministers of State Governments and Administrators of the Union

Territories (UTs) are its members. While the NWB is chaired by Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Secretaries of the concerned Union Ministries/Deptts. and the Chief Secretaries of States/UTs are its members.

The position in regard to the draft policy for resettlement and rehabilitation of persons affected by reservoir projects is that a Sub-Committee of the NWB after due deliberation of various factors and relevant aspects, prepared a draft National Policy on 4.9.1992. This draft policy was initially discussed by the NWB and then it was sent to all the States and UTs for their comments/ clearance. While comments of some of the States and UTs are still awaited. The matter is being actively pursued with these States and UTs. *It is only after obtaining comments from all States/UTs that the draft policy will be further discussed, modified, if necessary, and recommended by the NWB to the NWRC for adoption.*

It is thus quite evident that the whole process will take an indefinitely long time and as such the assurance cannot be fulfilled within a reasonable time frame. Moreover, there is a separate draft National Policy for Rehabilitation and Resettlement of people affected by all development projects being framed by the Ministry of Rural Development which has recently been declared as the nodal Ministry for rehabilitation and resettlement. The draft is under circulation to various concerned Ministries for inviting comments. The policy that would be finalised by the Ministry of Rural Development would also take into accounts the guiding principles identified in the draft National Policy for Rehabilitation and Resettlement of persons affected by reservoir projects. The need for separate policy for persons affected by reservoir projects will now have to be considered in the light of the National Policy to be adopted by the Ministry of Rural Development."

1.29 The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Water Resources for dropping the assurance at their sitting held on January 21, 1994.

1.30 The Committee did not agree to drop the assurance. The decision of the Committee was accordingly conveyed to the Ministry of Water Resources for compliance.

1.31 The Ministry of Water Resources sought extension of time upto April 29, 1994 to implement the assurance on the following grounds:—

"The draft policy for Resettlement and Rehabilitation of people affected by reservoir projects is under consideration of National Water Board after which it will be placed for consideration of National Water Resources Council in which all States are involved."

1.32 The Committee note that the guiding principles laid down in the draft National Policy prepared by the Sub-Committee of the National Water Board and adopted by the National Water Resource Council for resettlement and rehabilitation of persons affected by the reservoir projects, is pending with the Ministry of Water Resources since 4 September, 1992 for consideration and approval of the National Water Board which consists of the Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Secretaries of the concerned Union Ministries/Departments and the Chief Secretaries of the States/Union Territories. The Committee also note that the said draft policy stands circulated to all the States and Union Territories for their comments/ clearance. The contention of the Ministry that the comments of some of the States and Union Territories are still awaited is unacceptable to the Committee as in their opinion the matter has not been chased seriously and the States/Union Territories are allowed to take any length of time to furnish the comments. The Committee feel that had the Ministry of Water Resources given to the States and Union Territories a time limit for submission of comments, such an undue delay could have been avoided. The Committee also find that there has been lack of monitoring which has not been done at a sufficiently high level in the Ministry of Water Resources. The Committee wish to impress upon the Government that such casual attitude towards finalisation of the issue would add to the misery and hardships of the people who have been uprotted from the project sites and need to be resettled and rehabilitated with all the basic amenities.

1.33 The Committee deprecate such tendency towards solemn promises made on the floor of the House and would like to stress that sincere efforts should be made, with regard to early finalisation of the National Scheme so as to give maximum possible relief in minimum time to the affected people in order to enable them to sustain and attain reasonable standard of living and to have the facility for Housing, Education, Healthcare, etc. To achieve the desired results, the Committee would also like the Ministry of Water Resources to impress upon the Ministry of Rural Development, which is considered to be a nodal Ministry for rural schemes, the need for early finalisation of such schemes already initiated in that Ministry. Where the Ministry find that it may take a long time to implement an assurance, the request for granting extension of time should be sought from the Committee rather than try to get it dropped on one plea or the other.

CHAPTER II

(i) Financial Reforms

2. On August 27, 1993, the following Unstarred Question No. 4864 given notice of by Shri Bolla Bulli Ramaiah and Dr. D. Venketeswara Rao, M.P., was addressed to the Minister of Finance:—

"(a) whether the Government have studied various financial reforms initiated by some South-East Asian countries like China;

(b) if so, whether India would also like to adopt some of those reforms to further liberalise the economy;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether there is any proposal to restructure the Corporate Tax system; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?"

2.1 The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Dr. Abrar Ahmed) gave the following reply:—

"(a), (b) & (c): Government are aware of the financial reforms undertaken by some of the South-East Asian countries. The reforms initiated in the financial sector are based on the recommendations of the Narasimham Committee which submitted its Report in November, 1991. The members of the Committee were generally aware of the developments in the financial sectors in other countries.

(d) & (e): Proposals for restructuring of the Corporate Tax are part of the recommendations of the Tax Reform Committee, chaired by Professor Raja Chelliah. These recommendations are under consideration of the Government."

2.2 The above reply to the question was treated as an assurance and was required to be implemented by the Ministry of Finance by November 26, 1993 *i.e.* within three months of the date of assurance given by the Minister.

2.3 The Ministry approached the Committee on Government Assurances through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. VII/Fin. (46) USQ-4864-LS/93 dated December 21, 1993, to drop the assurance on the grounds indicated below:—

"The Government's views on the specific tax proposals contained in the Report can not be presented, prior to the presentation of the Budget to Parliament. In view of this constraint, the Ministry of Finance requests the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to kindly consider the dropping of the assurance."

2.4 The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Finance for dropping the assurance at their sitting held on January 21, 1994.

2.5 The Committee decide to drop the assurance.

(ii) Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi

2.6 On September 5, 1991, the following Unstarred Question No. 5892 given notice of by Shri Sudhir Sawant, M.P., was addressed to the Ministry of External Affairs:—

> "(a) whether a bill for the takeover of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) passed in the Rajya Sabha was introduced in the Ninth Lok Sabha;
> (b) if so, the present status of the Bill;
> (c) when the bill is proposed to be reintroduced in the Parliament; and
> (d) the steps proposed to be taken to improve the declining standards of ICWA Library?"

2.7 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Eduardo Faleiro) gave the following reply:—

> "(a): Yes, Sir.
> (b): The bill has since lapsed.
> (c) & (d): Government are considering various measures including the possibility of reintroducing a Bill in Parliament to improve the ICWA and restore its original standards."

2.8 On December 20, 1991, the following Starred Question No. 406 given notice of by Dr. A.K. Patel and Shri Shankersinh Vaghela, M.P., was addressed to the Minister of External Affairs:—

> "(a) whether the Government have taken any decision on the question of re-introduction of Bill in Parliament taking over the management of the Indian Council of World Affairs;
> (b) if so, the details thereof;
> (c) whether any funds have been released to the Council during the years 1989-90, 1990-91 and the current financial year; and
> (d) if so, the details thereof?"

2.9 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Eduardo Faleiro) gave the following reply:—

> "(a)&(b): The question of reintroduction of a bill in Parliament for taking over the management of the Indian Council of World Affairs is under consideration.
> (c)&(d): No, Sir."

2.10 On December 20, 1991, the following Unstarred Question No. 4737 given notice of by Dr. Laxminarain Pandey, M.P. was addressed to the Minister of External Affairs:—

(a) whether the Government have received any representation regarding mismanagment and irregularities prevailing in the Indian Council of World Affairs; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?"

2.11 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Eduardo Falerio) gave the following reply:—

"(a) yes, Sir.

(b) Government are considering various measures to improve the Indian Council of World affairs and to restore its original standard."

2.12 On April 30, 1992, the following Unstarred Question No. 8670 given notice of by Shri Madan Lal Khurana, M.P. was addressed to the Minister of External Affairs:—

"(a) whether the Government propose to reintroduce in Parliament a Bill for taking over the management of the Indian Council of World Affairs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?"

2.13 The then Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Eduardo Falciro) gave the following reply:—

"(a) to (c): The Matter is under consideration of the Government."

2.14 The replies to the above mentioned four assurances were treated as assurance and were required to be implemented by the Ministry of External Affairs within three months of time from the date of the assurance was given.

2.15 The Ministry of External Affairs approached the Committee on Government Assurances through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No.II/EA (13) SQ 406-LS/91 dated September 8, 1993 to drop the assurance on the grounds indicated below:—

"These assurances concern, funding mismanagement/irregularities etc. in the Indian Council for World Affairs. The ICWA is an autonomous body, registered as a private association for the purpose of promoting the study of international affairs and foreign policy. It had developed as a prestigious institution. However, it entered a period of decline during seventies and encountered both financial and management problems and began to draw adverse publicity in the press. In order to revitalise the Council, the Government promulgated an ordinance on 30th June, 1990 to declare the ICWA as an institution of national importance. To replace the ordinance, a Bill was introduced in the same year in

Rajya Sabha and passed by that House on 5th September, 1990. However, on 10th September, 1990, Punjab High Court on Writ Petition challenging the constitutionality of the Ordinance, declared it *ultra vires* of the Constitution of India and thus the Council had to be restored to its existing management.

In view of the fact that the Council is a private body and there is no funding available since 1987 from the Government, the Government has no control over the affairs of the Council. Thus it has not been possible to implement these assurances, nor is there any chance of doing so in the foreseeable future. Presently, the Government has decided to constitute an advisory committee to oversee the working of the ICWA. This Committee can only be constituted in pursuance of a resolution passed by the governing body of the Council. The Council is being pursuaded to pass such a Resolution.

*** *** ***

We have no objection if the above information is passed on to the Hon'ble Members."

2.16 The Committee (1993-94) at their first sitting held on January 5, 1994 considered the request of the Ministry of External Affairs for the dropping of the assurance. The Committee decided to keep the issue pending and consider the request of the Government after going through the judgement of the Punjab High Court which they wanted to be circulated to them.

2.17 The Committee again considered the request of the Ministry of External Affairs for dropping the assurance at their sitting held on January 21, 1994 keeping in the light of judgement of the Punjab High court.

2.18 The Committee decided to drop the assurance.

APPENDIX I

(*Vide* Para 4 of the Introduction)

MINUTES

First Sitting

MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES HELD ON JANUARY 5, 1994 IN COMMITTEE ROOM NO. '53', PARLIAMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI.

The Committee met on Monday, January 5, 1994 from 15.00 hours to 16.00 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Basudeb Acharia—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri Gurcharan Singh Dadhahoor
3. Shri P.P. Kaliaperumal
4. Shri Harpal Panwar
5. Shri Nawal Kishore Rai
6. Shri G. Ganga Reddy
7. Shri Yoganand Saraswati
8. Shri Shibu Soren
9. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak

SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. R.C. Bhardwaj — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri Murari Lal — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shri Joginder Singh — *Deputy Secretary*
4. Shri Ram Autar Ram — *Under Secretary*

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members of the Committee. For the information of the members of the new Committee, the Chairman in his inaugural address explained the scope and functions of the Committee. The text of his speech is at *Annexure-I.*

3. The Members of the Committee expressed their views on the slow pace of implementation of the promises given on the floor of the House from time to time by the Ministers.

4. The Committee then took up for consideration the following memoranda:—

Memorandum No. 80: Request for dropping of assurances given on:—

(i) September 5, 1991 in reply to USQ No. 5892;

(ii) December 19/20, 1991 in reply to SQ No. 406;

(iii) December 20, 1991 in reply to USQ No. 4737; and

(iv) April 30, 1992 in reply to USQ No. 8670 regarding Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.

5. The Committee considered the request of Ministry of External Affairs received through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. II/EA(13) SQ-406-LS/91 dated September 8, 1993 for the dropping of above mentioned four assurances on the following grounds:—

> "These assurances concern, funding mis-management/irregularities etc. in the Indian Counsel for World Affairs. The ICWA is an autonomous body, registered as a private association for the purpose of promoting the study of international affairs and foreign policy. It had developed as a prestigious institution. However, it entered a period of decline during seventies and encountered both financial and management problems and began to draw adverse publicity in the press. In order to revitalise the Council, the Government promulgated an ordinance on 30th June, 1990 to declare the ICWA as an institution of national importance. To replace the ordinance, a Bill was introduced in the same year in Rajya Sabha and passed by that house on 5th September, 1990. However, on 10th September, 1990 Punjab High Court on Writ Petition challenging the constitutionality of the ordinance, declared it *ultra vires* of the Constitution of India thus the Council had to be restored to its existing management.
>
> In view of the fact that the Council is a private body and there is no funding available since 1987 from the Government, the Government has no control over the affairs of the Council. Thus it has not been possible to implement these assurances, nor is there any chance of doing so in the foreseable future. Presently, the Government has decided to constitute an Advisory Committee to oversee the working of the ICWA. This Committee can only be constituted in pursuance of a resolution passed by the governing body of the Council. The Council is being pursuaded to pass such a Resolution.
>
> ... ...
>
> We have no objection if the above information is passed on to the Hon'ble Chairman."

5.1 The Committee did not accede to the request of the Ministry of External Affairs in the absence of judgement delivered by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on a Writ Petition challenging the constitutionality of

the ordinance. The Committee decided to keep the issue pending and consider the request of the Government after going through the judgement of the High Court on the issue.

Memorandum No. 81: Request for dropping of assurances given on:—

(i) April 21, 1989 in reply to Starred Question No. 686;

(ii) March 30, 1990 in reply to USQ No. 2973; and

(iii) July 26, 1991 in reply to SQ No. 178 regarding consignment tax.

6. The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Finance received through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. XIII/FIN(63)SQ No. 686-LS/89 dated December 2, 1993 for the dropping of the above mentioned three assurances on the following grounds;—

> "...that the proposal to levy tax on inter-State consignment of goods (consignment tax) was discussed in the Inter-State Council meeting held on 10.10.90. It was decided in the meeting to discuss the matter in the conference of States Finance Ministers. The matter was put up to the former Finance Minister who desired to discuss the same first in an internal meeting which was fixed for 18.2.91 and 9.3.91 but was postponed on each occasion. The matter was subsequently reviewed by the present Finance Minister on 28.8.91. In view of the divergent opinions expressed by the Union Ministries/Departments and the State Governments about the nature of transactions and the types of commodities to be exempted from the levy of the proposed consignment tax, The National Institute of Public Finance and Policy was entrusted the task of drafting the guidelines for exercising the concurrent power of exemption by the Central Government and the State Governments.
>
> The Report of National Institute of Public Finance and Policy was circulated to the State Governments and the concernd Central Ministries and Departments for their comments. The Tax Reforms Committee headed by Dr. Raja J. Chelliah also made certain observations in its Interim Report, which was sent to the Chief Ministers and Administrators of the States and Union Territories respectively. The matter was thereafter discussed on 6.11.92 in a meeting of the Chief Secretaries of the States and Union Territories which was also attended to by the representatives of the concerned Central Ministries and in the Sub-Committee meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 11th February, 1993.
>
> Recently, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has written to all the Chief Ministers of States and the concerned Governors/Lt. Governors and Administrators of Union Territories on 16th July, 1993. It has been stated in the Letter that the consensus reached in the meeting of the Chief Ministers was not precise enough.

Subsequent consultations with States had revealed that there was considerable divergence of views as regards the rates of Consignment Tax, the sharing of its proceeds and the general issues relating to concurrent exemptions. It was felt that it would be difficult to bring forward a Bill for this purpose unless a consensus was generated on the Key parameters. Finance Minister has mentioned that there was considerable room or rethinking on the entire matter afresh so that there was no fragmentation of the common market in India. In this connection, the question of introducing a Value Added Tax (VAT) both at the Centre and in the States in place of existing commodity taxes could also receive consideration. Many development and developing countries in the world including those with federal structure had already switched over to a value added tax, as it was recognised to be a tax which had all the merits of simplicity, elasticity and flexibility. The National Institute of Public Finance & Policy was preparing a paper on VAT which was likely to be ready shortly. After this paper is received, this matter would be reviewed in a meeting of the Chief Ministers and later in the National Development Council.

In view of the position explained above, the assurance is not likely to be fulfilled in the near future. It is, therefore, requested to kindly move the Committee on Government Assurances to drop the Assurance from the list of pending Assurances."

6. The Committee decided not to drop the assurance and desired that the Ministry should seek extension of time for its implementation.

7. The Committee also decided to hold their next sitting on Friday, January 28, 1994 at 15.00 hours.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

(*Vide* Para No. 4 of the Indroduction)

MINUTES

Second Sitting

MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES HELD ON JANUARY 21, 1994 IN ROOM NO. '143' PARLIAMENT HOUSE, NEW DELHI

The Committee met on Friday, January 21, 1994 from 15.00 hours to 16.30 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Basudeb Acharia—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri Gurcharan Singh Dadhahoor
3. Shri P.P. Kaliaperumal
4. Maj. D.D. Khanoria
5. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak
6. Shrimati Suryakanta Patil
7. Shri Yoganand Saraswati
8. Shri V.S. Vijayaraghavan

SECRETARIAT

Shri Murari Lal —*Joint Secretary*

Shri Joginder Singh —*Deputy Secretary*

Shri Ram Autar Ram —*Under Secretary*

2. The Committee considered and adopted their draft Eighteenth Report. The Committee authorised the Chairman and in his absence Shri V.S. Vijayaraghavan, M.P. to present to the House the same on the second day of the budget session of 1994.

3. The Committee then took up for consideration Memoranda Nos. 82, 83, 84 and 85 regarding dropping of assurances:—

Memorandum No. 82: Request for dropping of assurance given on November 27, 1992 in reply to Unstarred Question No. 840 regarding World Bank loan to NABARD Project.

4. The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Finance received through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note

No. V/FIN(22) USQ 840-LS/92 dated December 21, 1993 for the dropping of the above mentioned assurances on the following grounds:

> ".....that the time frame for a final decision to be taken in the matter is uncertain and as there would need to be detailed discussions with the World Bank before a decision to fund the project is taken, it is requested that the reply to part (c) of above question may not be treated as an assurance and may be deleted from list of assurances under intimation to this Department."

4.1 The Committee did not accede to the request of the Ministry of Finance. The Committee desired to know the latest position in regard to the implementation of the assurance.

Memorandum No. 83: Request for dropping of assurance given on July 29, 1993 in reply to Unstarred Question No. 876 regarding resettlement and rehabilitation of people affected by reservoir projects.

5. The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Water Resources received through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. VII/WR(3) USQ 876-LS/93 dated 21.12.93 for the dropping of the above mentioned assurance on the following grounds:

> "...that the draft policy is presently under consideration of the National Water Board (NWB) that is constituted for review of the implementation of National Water Policy adopted by the National Water Resources Council (NWRC). The NWRC is chaired by the Prime Minister and the concerned Union Ministers, Chief Ministers of State Governments and Administrators of the Union Territories (UT) are its members. While the NWB is chaired by Secretary, Minister of Water Resources, Secretaries of the concerned Union Ministeries/Deptts. and the Chief Secretaries of States/UTs are its members.
>
> The position in regard to the draft policy for resettlement and rehabilitation of persons affected by reservoir projects is that a Sub Committee of the NWB after due deliberation of various factors and relevant aspects, prepared a draft National Policy on 4.9.1992. This draft policy was initially discussed by the NWB and then it was sent to all the States and UTs for their comments/clearance. While comments of some of the States and UTs have been received that from many States and UTs are still awaited. The matter is being actively pursued with these States and UTs. *It is only after obtaining comments from all States/UTs that the draft policy will be further*

discussed, modified, if necessary, and recommended by the NWB to the NWRC for adoption.

It is thus quite evident that the whole process will take an indefinitely long time and as such the assurance cannot be fulfilled within a reasonable time frame. Moreover, there is a separate draft National Policy for Rehabilitation and Resettlement of people affected by all development projects being framed by the Ministry of Rural Development which has recently been declared as the nodal Ministry for rehabilitation and resettlement. The draft is under circulation to various concerned Ministries for inviting comments. The policy that would be finalised by the Ministry of Rural Development would also take into account the guiding principle identified in the draft National Policy for Rehabilitation and Resettlement of persons affected by reservoir projects. The need for separate policy for persons affected by reservoir projects will now have to be considered in the light of the National Policy to be adopted by the Ministry of Rural Development."

5.1 The Committee did not accede to the request for dropping of assurance and desired that the draft Report in Question should atleast be finalised by the National Water Board in order to fulfil the assurance.

Memorandum No. 84: Request for dropping of assurance given on August 27, 1993 in reply to Unstarred Question No. 4864 regarding Financial Reforms.

6. The Committee considered the request of the Ministry of Finance received through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their U.O. Note No. VII/Fin. (46) USQ-4864-LS/93 dated 21.12.93 for the dropping of above mentioned assurance on the following grounds:—

"The Government's views on the specific tax proposals contained in the Report cannot be presented, prior to the presentation of the Budget to Parliament. In view of this constraint, the Ministry of Finance requests the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to kindly consider the dropping of the Assurance."

6.1 The Committee acceded to the request of the Ministry of Finance and decided to drop the assurance.

Memorandum No. 85: Request for dropping of assurance given on:—

(i) September 5, 1991 in reply to USQ 5892;
(ii) December 19/20, 1991 in reply to SQ 406;
(iii) December 20, 1991 in reply to USQ 4737; and
(iv) April 30, 1991 in reply to USQ No. 8670 regarding Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.

7. The Committee reconsidered the request of the Ministry of External Affairs received through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs *vide* their

U.O. Note No. II/EA(13) SQ 406-LS/91 dated September 8, 1993 for dropping of the above assurance in the light of the judgement delivered by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on writ petition challenging the constitutionality of the Ordnance about ICWA.

7.1 The Committee acceded to the request of the Ministry of External Affairs and decided to drop all the four assurances in a view of reasons indicated by the Government.

8. The Committee then decided to hold their next sitting on Thursday, February 10, 1994 at 11.30 hours.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX III

(*Vide* Para No. 4 of the Introduction)

MINUTES

Fifth Session

MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES HELD ON APRIL 6, 1994 IN PARTY MEETING ROOM NO. '139' PARLIAMENT HOUSE ANNEXE, NEW DELHI

The Committee met on Wednesday, April 6, 1994 from 11.00 to 12.00 hours.

PRESENT

Shri Basudeb Acharia—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri P.P. Kaliaperumal
3. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak
4. Shri V. Sreenivasa Prasad
5. Shri Nawal Kishore Rai
6. Shri Yoganand Saraswati
7. Shri G. Ganga Reddy
8. Shri V.S. Vijayaraghvan

SECRETARIAT

Shri Murari Lal — *Joint Secretary*
Shri Joginder Singh — *Deputy Secretary*
Shri Ram Autar Ram — *Under Secretary*

2. The Committee considered and adopted their Twentieth Report with the following additions and modifications:—

(i) The following be added at the end of para No. 1.15 of Chapter I (i) relating the Levy of Consignment Tax:-

"The Committee urge upon the Government to make all out efforts to narrow down divergence of views regarding the levy of consignment tax."

(ii) In para No. 1.16 of Chapter I (i) relating to the Levy of Consignment Tax *for the words*—"in the Monsoon Session of Lok Sabha this year in order to implement the assurances," the words "at the earliest to implement the assurances."*be substituted.*

(iii) In para No. 1.33 of Chapter I (iii) relating to resettlement and rehabilitation, affected by reservoir project, *for the words* 'sought from' *substitute* 'made to'.

3. The Committee authorised the Chairman to present the Report in the House during the Current Budget Session.

*** *** ***

9. The Committee decided to undertake a study tour to Madras/Bombay Lakshadweep and Goa sometime towards the end of the May or beginning of June, 1994 to examine the implementation of assurances relating to these places.

10. The Committee decided to hold their next sitting on Friday, April 22, 1994 at 15.00 hours.

The Committee then adjourned.

ANNEXURE

INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA, M.P., CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES, TENTH LOK SABHA (1993-94) AT THE FIRST SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 5.1.1994

Friends and Colleagues,

I am greatly delighted to extend a warm welcome to you all to this first sitting of our re-constituted Committee on Government Assurances for the year 1993-94.

2. As most of us are new to this Committee, I feel that it would be profitable if today we talk about the scope and functions of this Committee, the procedure to be followed regarding assurances given by the Ministers on the floor of the House from time to time.

3. As all of us are aware, Ministers while replying to Questions or supplementaries thereon or during discussion on Bills, Resolutions, Motions, etc. give assurances, undertakings or promises either to take action on a matter or furnish relevant information thereon to the House later on. The Secretariat of the Committee culls out/takes up these assurances, and chase them for their implementation within the time schedule of three months prescribed by the Committee.

4. The Committee on Government Assurances was first constituted by the Speaker on the 1st December, 1953. Prior to this there was no institutional arrangement to make a scrutiny or keep a watch of the assurances given by Ministers. The appointment of this Committee has helped in easing the problems of the Members who had to follow up of the implementation of assurances in their individual capacity. It also helped in effective and expeditious fulfilment of the assurances.

5. The functions of the Committee as enumerated in Rule 323 of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, are to scrutinise the assurances, promises, undertakings, etc. given by the Ministers from time to time on the floor of the House and report on:—

(i) the extent to which such assurances, promises, undertakings, etc. have been implemented; and

(ii) where implemented whether such implementation has taken place within the minimum time necessary for the purpose.

6. The Secretariat of the Committee has already circulated to all the Members of the Committee the Brochure entitled "An Introductory Guide" which gives in nutshell the scope and functions of the Committee. This is a useful booklet and I hope you all might have already gone through it.

7. The expressions which constitute an assurance, as laid down by the Committee in 1954 in their First Report, have been printed as annexure to the Introductory Guide. Besides laying down the standard forms, the Committee has also framed detailed Rules of Procedure for its internal working and these Rules are given in the Introductory Guide circulated to you.

8. The initial and the first exercise of noting the assurances given by the Ministers is undertaken by the Lok Sabha Secretariat which thoroughly examines the Lok Sabha Debates for this purpose. The Ministry concerned starts action for implementation soon after the assurance is given by their Minister. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs acts as a coordinating agency between the Ministries/Departments of the Government and the Committee in order to ensure prompt implementation of assurances. The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs forward to the Lok Sabha Secretariat a weekly statement of assurances prepared by them after going through the Debates. The assurances poted by the Lok Sabha Secretariat and as intimated by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs are then tallied and in case Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has failed to cull out an assurance, its attention is drawn by the Lok Sabha Secretariat to the relevant remarks made by the Minister in the House constituting the assurance. In case Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs does not agree with the view of the Lok Sabha Secretariat that the particular remarks of the Minister constitute an assurance, the matter is placed before the Chairman of the Committee for decision. When the Chairman considers it necessary, he may place the matter before the Committee for its decision.

9. In regard to the implementation of the assurances normally a time-limit of three months has been laid down by the Committee. However, in case of any genuine difficulty in implementing an assurance within the prescribed period of three months, the Government can approach the Committee for extension of time stating the grounds on which the extension is sought. I may mention here that the Committee would be considering the requests of the assurance keeping in view the broad principles laid down by the previous Committee at their sitting held on 11 January, 1983, wherein it was decided that the assurances might be classified into three categories and extension of time for implementation of these assurances might also be specified as follows:

(i) *Category 'A'*: Where the assurances pertain solely to the Central subject request for one extension of three months might be agreed to.

(ii) *Category 'B'*: Where assurances pertain to a matter which is in the concurrent list and the information needed for implementation of the assurances pertains partly to the Central Government, in such cases the Committee might grant one or more extensions after taking into account the efforts made by the Ministry to collect the information from the State Government(s).

(iii) *Category 'C'*: Where the assurances pertain to a matter which falls purely in the jurisdiction of State Governments and the Central Government is supposed to collect information from all those States request for extension of time for implementation of such assurances might be agreed to subject to the Chairman of Committee being convinced that sincere efforts are being made by the Central Government to collect the information from the State Government(s).

10. On behalf of the various Ministries or Departments of the Government of India, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs lay on the Table of the Lok Sabha from time to time statements showing action taken by the Government in implementation of assurances, promises and undertakings given by the Ministers. These statements are examined by the Lok Sabha Secretariat in terms of Rules 323 of the Rules of Procedure. Such of the assurances as do not appear to have been implemented satisfactorily are placed before the Committee for further directions. Cases where Government take unreasonably long time in implementation of the assurances are also placed before the Committee.

11. The powers and privileges of the Committee are the same as those of the other Parliamentary Committees such as the power to take evidence or call for documents, send for persons, papers and records etc.

12. During the Fifth Lok Sabha, the Committee came to the conclusion that it was necessary to take evidence of the representatives of various Ministries/Departments, where necessary, to enable the Committee to go deep into the reasons resulting in delay in implementation of assurances in specific cases. Accordingly, the Committee have been hearing the representatives of different Ministries/Departments from time to time in connection with selected cases of delays in implementation of assurances and thereafter making suitable recommendations/observations with regard to these matters in their Report which are presented to the House. This procedure of examining witnesses of Ministries, etc. has had a definite effect in speeding up implementation of the assurances and thus reducing the number of pending assurances.

13. This Committee has to take over as many as 2131 assurances pertain to Seventh, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Lok Sabha for implementation from the previous Committee (1992-93). The Lok Sabha-wise detail of these assurances are as follows:—

	Total assurances		
	Culled out	Implemented/ dropped	Pending
Seventh Lok Sabha	7231	7230	1
Eighth Lok Sabha	9022	8951	71
Ninth Lok Sabha	2827	2665	162
Tenth Lok Sabha (1st Session to Seventh Session)	5106	3209	1897
			2131

14. The assurances relating to the 'Winter Session' (December 2 to 24, 1993) are being culled out and compiled by the Secretariat.

15. I again point out that identification of government assurances in the proceedings of the House is not an easy task. Differences may arise between Parliament and the Executive as to which words or expressions constitute assurances, undertakings etc. In case of difference of an opinion regarding treating a reply as an assurance, the decision of the Committee is final and it prevails on the Government of India.

16. During the course of examination of pending assurances, if the Committee find that there was abnormal delay in fulfilling any assurance, the Committee may, if it feels necessary that an on the spot study should be made to have first hand information about the reasons for the delay, etc. undertake tour to the Department/Organisation, etc. connected with the subject under examination, subject to specific approval of the Honourable Speaker. The Committee may also undertake on the spot study tours in connection with implemented assurances of the Department/Organisation, etc. connected with the subject under examination to find out whether the assurances have been adequately and timely implemented. However, these occasions are not frequent.

17. By convention, all the pending assurances of earlier Lok Sabha are reviewed by the new Committee of the new Lok Sabha and only those assurances which are of substantial character and of considerable importance are selected for being pursued further and the rest are dropped. The first Committee of the Tenth Lok Sabha had examined the pending assurances of the earlier Lok Sabhas and have already reported the pending assurances which were considered to be important and to be persued further.

18. I am confident that all the Members of the Committee would take an active and keen interest in the working of the Committee through you may remain busy in other parliamentary works both inside and outside the House. Our efforts must be to continue to maintain the happy and well established tradition of working together in a spirit of mutual cooperation and coordination rising above the party affiliations on issues coming up before the Committee.

Thank you.